

Frequently Asked Questions about the Revised Rated License

Family Child Care Homes

1. Can you explain the two component rated license system?

During the 2005 Legislative Session, House Bill 707 was passed which resulted in changes to North Carolina's Star Rated License System. Prior to the change in legislation, compliance history was one of the three components of a star rated license. The compliance history will now be a minimum requirement for maintaining any license as well as a Notice of Compliance. Any new child care facility that opens on or after January 1, 2006, will be assessed for a Star Rating of Two to Five Stars based only on program standards and staff education. An existing child care facility will have until January 1, 2008, to be assessed under the two component system. The proposed point system would allow a program to earn up to seven (7) points in program standards and seven (7) points in education standards, with the option to earn one (1) quality point.

2. What options are available for family child care home (FCCH) providers to earn one quality point?

If a FCCH provider meets a programmatic or educational quality point option, one point will be added to the total points earned.

Proposed programmatic options are:

- *Use of age/developmentally appropriate curriculum*
- *Completion of a business training course*
- *Restricting enrollment to four preschool children*
- *Reducing infant capacity by at least one child from the seven point level.*
At the seven points level, of the five preschoolers allowed to be enrolled, no more than three children can be under one year of age. To earn a quality point for this option, the operator would need to enroll no more than two children under one year of age.

Proposed educational options are:

- *A family child care home provider has obtained an Infant/Toddler Certificate or has a BA/BS or higher in early childhood education/child development.*
- *Completion of 20 additional annual in-service training hours.*

3. If I am currently a one star Family Child Care Home, do I have to transition to the new system?

The new rated license system is still a voluntary system. Providers can choose to remain at the one star level. However, even one star programs will be required to meet the 75 % minimum compliance history beginning in January 2008. Any new program opening on or after January 1, 2006 will be required to meet the 75% compliance history immediately even if they choose to remain a one star home..

4. Will it become necessary for all FCCH providers to have the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS)?

No, FCCH providers do not have to complete a FDCRS assessment. Completing a FDCRS is voluntary, however to achieve higher points in program standards for a star rating, an operator would need to complete the FDCRS and score at least a 4.0 or higher.

5. Why is being Nationally Accredited no longer an option for program standards ?

Currently, very few home providers use this option in place of the FDCRS because of the expense of the accreditation. There is no system of consistency among the accrediting validators which can result in varying expectations or acceptance levels across the state. In addition, accreditation is not awarded based on the licensing time frame, which allow accreditation to lapse without the Division knowing.

6. Will training be offered to all FCCH providers on the revised rated license system?

Yes, provider meetings will be available to all child care providers after the proposed rules become effective. Meetings will focus on the new rules and will provide information on the new rated license system. The Division anticipates meetings to begin this summer.

7. If I have a three star license and apply for a four star license after December 31, 2005, under what rated license system will I be assessed under?

Any child care facility that was operating prior to January 1, 2006, has until January 1, 2008, to be assessed under the two component rated license system. A child care facility may choose to transition to the two component system earlier. An existing facility could still choose to be assessed under the three component system until January 1, 2008, when they would have to transition to the two component system.

8. How do I prepare to meet the 75% in compliance history?

Any child care program that was operating prior to January 1, 2006, has until January 1, 2008, to transition to the new compliance history system. By January 1, 2008, for any child care facility to maintain a license or Notice of Compliance, the child care facility must have a compliance history of at least 75% for the past 18 months or during the length of time the facility has operated, whichever is less.

9. What does it mean to have 12 semester hours (SH) in early childhood education (ECE) with 2 SH in child care administration?

At the 5 point level in education standards, a FCCH provider can earn points by having at least 12 SH in early childhood education with at least 2 SH being in child care administration coursework. A provider can earn 6 points by having 18 SH in early childhood education with at least 5 SH being in child care administration coursework. The Division would count Early Childhood Administration I and Early Childhood Administration II, which is EDU 261 and EDU 262, and various other child care administration coursework from other regionally accredited colleges and universities.

10. I have heard that there is money available to help me transition to the new rated license system. How do I become eligible for those grants?

Transition grants are available for those programs that have a minimum of three points in program standards and two points in education standards. The amount of money available is determined based on the program's total points and the number of children enrolled. All licensed providers should have received information by mail about these transition grants. Contact information was listed in this mailing. If you have not received this mailing, you may contact your Lead Child Care Resource & Referral agency for more details.